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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Cynthia A. Harding, M.P.H.
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Margaret Donnellan Todd
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SUBJECT: **FLU VACCINE OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH
LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND LOS ANGELES CITY LIBRARIES**

This is to provide an update on the Department of Public Health's (DPH) influenza (flu) vaccine outreach and partnerships with County of Los Angeles and City of Los Angeles Libraries to offer flu vaccine.

Every year, 10% to 20% of Americans become ill with influenza (flu) and an average of 24,000 people die from flu-related complications. In Los Angeles County, during the 2013-2014 flu season, approximately 105 deaths were attributed to the flu.

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus. The virus is spread by droplets expelled when infected individuals cough, sneeze or speak. The influenza virus can adversely affect certain populations more than others. Those at highest risk for complications include: pregnant women, children, adults 50 years of age and older, and immunocompromised individuals. The best way to prevent influenza is by getting vaccinated each year. To address this issue, the DPH Community Health Services (CHS) division plans annual outreach throughout the eight Service Planning Areas (SPAs) in venues such as: faith-based institutions and community and senior centers. Outreach locations have been selected historically based upon community agency requests and prior partnerships. Some of these have not succeeded in reaching those at highest risk.

During the current 2014-2015 flu season, DPH continues to prioritize high risk groups for vaccination within LA County through targeted venues that serve these groups (i.e., children, uninsured, ethnic minorities, homeless, etc.). Evidence has shown that structural level interventions, such as expanding access at trusted community-based sites, increases vaccine uptake among the hard-to-reach.

Libraries are a valued institution within communities where residents turn to obtain resources and information on a variety of topics, including health information. Library systems have recognized this need and responded through the integration of health promotion programs. Expanding the flu

campaign to include Los Angeles County and Los Angeles City Libraries proved to be in direct alignment with their mission. The steps below outline the actions taken by DPH and the Libraries to develop this partnership and launch the campaign.

CHS Administration collaborated with both County and City Library Administrators to select sites based upon the following criteria:

- Accessibility – libraries with close proximity to public transportation
- Libraries that serve at-risk populations
- Libraries that have a high volume of patrons
- Libraries with existing health promotion programs
- Libraries with a physical layout conducive to outreach activities

CHS public health nurses worked closely with library managers to select optimal dates and times to schedule the flu clinics. Many of the outreach events occurred on the weekend in an effort to serve the most residents. Library managers aggressively promoted outreach through the development and distribution of flyers and postage of signage throughout participating libraries. DPH developed a press release to publicize this effort that was featured in the following media: the Daily News and broadcast on NBC, KTLA, and KTTV news. Flu outreach was also promoted via a variety of DPH and Library social media outlets.

In summary, twelve County and seven City Libraries hosted flu clinics, with a total of 2,169 Los Angeles County residents vaccinated. This innovative partnership proved to be a successful collaboration that will ultimately contribute to DPH's mission to prevent disease transmission among residents within Los Angeles County and the Library's mission to serve as a valued resource for the community. Overall, the flu outreach events were well received by both DPH and library staff, and well attended by the community. It is our plan to replicate this program next flu season, using the data obtained from this pilot effort to inform library selection and maximizing the number of those at highest risk who are being vaccinated.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please let us know.

CAH:MDT:dd

c: Interim Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Acting Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors